

1:Du Bois E-5 (1938-1939) 1944
OF5 Alor OF5

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Manifani, a financier from Dikimpe.



An Alorese youth.



A young widow much admired
in Atimelang for her beauty.



A young girl whose teeth have just been blackened and filed. Her molars are occluded.

[p. 32 C-2]

Chapter 6

Adolescence, Marriage, and Sex

§1 THE problems of adolescence are very different for boys and girls. One of the most marked differences is the greater prolongation of the period for boys. Neither sex has any ritually or socially recognized crisis rites to dramatize the passage from childhood to adulthood. It is basically an individual and personal transition that must be made. There are no men's clubs, no secret societies, no tribal initiation for boys. For girls there are absolutely no first menses ceremonies or even restrictions.

The closest approach to a symbolic recognition of adulthood offered by the society is tattooing for girls, letting the hair grow long for boys, and tooth blackening and filing for both sexes. But even these devices are casual and optional, so that the initiative must be taken by the adolescent himself. They are not utilized to further the young person's education or alter his status.

TATTOOING FOR GIRLS

[227] The time for girls to be tattooed is on the first day of the four-day communal pig hunt at the end of the dry season, when most of the boys and men leave the village. There is no implied sex segregation in the choice of this time, since any man who has failed to go hunting may be present during the tattooing process. In fact, men also may be tattooed, but this is done casually by some friend at any time during the year, and later in young manhood. Tattooing is rarer among men than among women. Almost all women are tattooed, whereas only an occasional man is.

● 304
351 The men set off for the hunt shortly after dawn, accompanied by a group of women who may not go beyond the crest of the hill. The women then return and are required to be quiet and avoid unduly vigorous activity until the men come back. Girls whose breasts are beginning to develop take this opportunity to be tattooed, but they must wait until a black column of smoke rises from the grass fired by the men for the pig drives. If they do not wait, the tattoo designs will be light and impermanent. Each girl herself expresses the wish and collects the necessary materials. These are a thorn and finely pounded coconut-shell charcoal mixed with the juice of banana bark. Some grown woman who feels that she has a certain skill in the matter will volunteer to perform the operation. The girl lays her head in the operator's lap; a

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design is first traced on her forehead or cheek and is then pricked in 304 with a thorn dipped in charcoal. The procedure usually draws a num- 881 ber of girls and adult women, all of whom discuss animatedly which of a limited number of simple designs will be used. Often a little girl who has taken no initiative in the matter will be urged by a friend or adult to undergo the operation. Beauty is the only objective.

It is a tradition to insist that the operation does not hurt, and when 1304 asked a girl who had just had the task completed whether it was painful, older women answered before she was able to, assuring me that it was not. On one occasion some older women, by way of teasing the child's grandmother, urged a little girl of seven to let herself be tattooed. The grandmother arrived just in time to prevent the scheme from being carried out. She was very indignant that her grandchild should have been cajoled into it when she was obviously so young. In relation to a discussion of skills and craftsmanship which will come later, it should be stated that the tattooing process is often very crude and usually impermanent, so that traces of designs are rarely distinguishable on the faces of middle-aged women.

GROWING UP FOR BOYS

Whereas girls are tattooed from approximately ten to fourteen, the 881 comparable badge of adulthood for boys, i.e., long hair, does not come until somewhat later, at ages I should estimate from sixteen to eighteen. When boys begin to let their hair grow long, they also begin borrowing 927 or acquiring male accouterments. These are dwelt upon in loving detail in many myths and consist of a sword, a front shield, a back shield, a parrying shield, a bow, a wide belt of woven rattan that serves as a 926 quiver, an areca basket with bells, and the tubular, areca-bark hair cylinder with the accompanying combs and head plumes. Naturally, a young man rarely succeeds in borrowing or acquiring all these articles at first, but he gets as many as he can and struts about in them, often followed by the half-admiring, half-derisive comments of older women 522 and girls. There is a special expression for the type of laughter that 882 women direct toward a young man, which I can translate only by our word *hoot*. Its character is as unmistakable as the laughter that accompanies the telling of smutty jokes in our culture. A young man of about twenty himself described in the following words this attitude and the associated courting interests of both boys and girls.

"When a lot of women get together to work in the fields or to fetch 521 water, they talk and talk. When you hear them hoot, that means they 931 are talking about a man. Maybe one girl says she likes a certain man and intends to sleep with him

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ing instance. Langmai, who was courting Kolmani by helping her⁵⁸⁴ with the storage of her harvest, suggested that they had better marry,¹⁵² by saying, "Who will eat this corn I am stacking? I had better come and eat it myself."

TOOTH BLACKENING

It is during this period of adolescence that both boys and girls have³⁰⁴ their teeth blackened and filed. Again the matter is optional, but since⁸⁸¹ shiny black teeth are much admired and long uneven ones are considered very ugly, practically every young person has his blackened and probably half have them filed. The process is more or less in the nature of a prolonged picnic, free from adult supervision. It is without doubt⁸³⁶ also a period of license for many of the young people, although adults³⁰⁴ vigorously contradicted my phrasing it so.⁸⁸¹

The best indication of the sexual liberty current at this time is that stricter parents forbid their daughters to remain in remote field houses overnight and insist upon their staying at home or near by in the house of some responsible elder kin. Further, when I visited such a group one evening at sundown just as the strips of dye were being passed out, the young man in charge of procuring and mixing the paste used to darken the teeth said sternly to the children, "Now, no intercourse tonight" — a comment that produced a ripple of giggling among the boys and girls.

The actual procedure is as follows: In July or August some young³⁰⁴ unmarried man, perhaps in his early twenties, announces that he will⁸⁸¹ blacken teeth for the children of the community and designates the field house where it will be done. This is the slack season agriculturally, so that girls can be spared from the fields. He purchases from some^[317] friend in the village of Bakudatang a particular type of soil found there. This investment rarely exceeds five cents. With the earth he mixes a^[386] fruit resembling a small green fig. The resulting paste is smeared on a strip of banana bark which each child cuts to fit the size of his mouth. The preparation of each day's supply takes the better part of an afternoon. For at least seven nights, and often ten, the children sleep together in a field house, with the paste held against their teeth by the flexible bark strips. During the day boys assiduously hunt rats, and girls go to their fields to collect vegetable foods. The children all eat together, being careful to place small bits of food far back in their mouths in order not to spoil the dye. With the same objective a length of thin bamboo is used as a drinking tube during the period. Surplus rats are smoked to preserve them for a feast on the last day.

The whole procedure reminds one very much of "playing house." It is a carefree time for all the young people. There are no taboos asso-

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84
881 There are no taboos
[184] ciated with the period except that attending a dance will interfere with proper dyeing and that if small children loiter too near the older group they will fail to grow up rapidly. For his services the young man is paid a nominal sum of an arrow, or nowadays a penny, per child. He seldom makes more than twenty or thirty cents for a week's work. When I asked why a young man undertook such a task when the reward was so small, the answer was, "Because he likes to be near young girls."

304 On the last day or two of the period those who are to have their
881 teeth filed go through the ordeal. The same person who prepared the dye usually does the tooth filing. The subject's head is laid on the thigh of the operator and wedged against his side with his elbow. The jaws are propped open with a piece of corncob. The six upper and six lower
[42] front teeth are then filed to half their length with an ordinary knife blade which has been nicked to resemble a saw. Apparently experience makes it possible to avoid the root canal, which occupies only the upper half of the incisors. The whole operation takes about two or three
[437] hours, and for this the operator is paid the equivalent of about five cents. It is undoubtedly painful but, as in tattooing, it is bad form to admit it. The result of this filing means that even when the back teeth
[832] are occluded, the tongue will show pinkly between the gaping front teeth when a person smiles. This is considered definitely attractive.

The complete informality of this ceremony is manifest by the fact that some of the young people return two or three years in succession if the first attempt at blackening was not successful. Also, anyone, at any time, may have his teeth filed down to a straight, even line for appearance's sake. The range of ages is also wide. Boys may be from about fourteen to twenty and girls from twelve to eighteen. There is no regulation against young married people joining the group. The married people, however, are most likely to be girls, since marriage comes early for them.

Tattooing, the beginning of masculine vanity, courting, and tooth blackening are all preliminaries to marriage for young people. It will be necessary now to describe the financial elaborations involved in marriage for the young Atimelangers, how they enter into such relationships, and what some of the associated sex attitudes and practices are.

STRUCTURE OF MARRIAGE FINANCE

583 Marriage has as one of its major functions the establishment of a series of exchanges between groups of extended affinal kin which will continue as long as the marriage lasts. There are three major types of

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one particularly well-built and energetic young man who was still un-831 married would have difficulty in procuring a young woman as a wife because his organ was known to be undersized. His father had been concerned about it even when he was a child and had attempted to remedy the situation by massage. On another occasion some women were discussing an ailing boy of two years. They handled his genitals and shook their heads with concern because the male organs were so flaccid. Circumcision is known as a coastal, Mohammedan practice, but [304] it is not followed by the mountain people. Fantan the Interpreter reported overhearing a conversation between two middle-aged women who were comparing the virility of their husbands. One complained that her husband was no longer able to give her sexual satisfaction.

The terms dealing with sexual activities offer two very interesting 196 points in connection with the thesis that sex and food are inextricably 831 associated in the minds of the Atimelangers.

- male organs—*batok* (his intestine)
- female organs—*hoiy* (also verbal form for copulate)
- orgasm—*homim ve meli* (heart from it tasty)
- male hermaphrodite—*batok muri* (his intestine orange)
- female hermaphrodite—*hoiy muri* (vagina orange)
- philanderer—*tafui* (crab)
- illegitimate child—*tafui vi* (crab child)
- uvula—*kai hoiy bika* (head clitoris)

Of this list perhaps the most interesting features are that the male geni- [327] tals are associated with his digestive system and that an orgasm is described with a food adjective.

Homosexuality seems to be absent among adults, although again the 838 practice was known among the troops and prisoners on the coast. The attitude is one of not quite understanding why such practices should be desirable rather than one of disapproval. Inquiries into the matter usually precipitated anecdotes about a hermaphrodite from Dikimpe who had died some twenty years before. One of the most complete accounts, which reveals social attitudes toward such a person, as well as toward the two sexes, was given by his grandnephew who had lived with him.

"When Alurkaseni was still small, he was a woman called Tilamani. People would look at him and say, 'This is like a woman but in the middle is a penis.' He wore a woman's loincloth and learned to weave baskets. He even wove areca baskets, which are the most difficult to make. He went to dances and joined in with the women. As he grew up his breasts got big, and men would tug them. Men liked him. He did

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Genealogy of Rilpada

x 159
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X Padafani (adopted into the village)
= O Kolata (1st wife)

O Lonmani
O Fullehi
O Kolpada

X Senmani
= O Tilapada

= O Kolmau (2nd wife)

X Melangkai, d. 20 yrs.
X Kupaipada, d. 13 yrs.
X RILPADA, 35 yrs.
= O Lonseni, 45 yrs.
X Senmani, 28 yrs.
O Kolfani
= X Maara

= O Lonseni (3rd wife)

= O Maliepada (4th wife)

= O Tilala (5th wife) — O Tilamobi, d. infancy

= O Kolmanimai (6th wife)

= O Lonmale (7th wife) — O d. infancy

= O Kolpada (8th wife)

= O Kolpadakalieta (9th wife)

X Fankalieta
= O (1st wife)

O Lomai
X Padamai
X Mangma

= O (2nd wife)

X Manifani
O Tilafani
X Langmai
X Lakamau

O Tilamau
= X Fantan the Interpreter

x 159 bamboo tubes full [twenty to thirty rats to a tube]. When we finished blackening our teeth, we told the girls, twenty-two of them, to pound and cook corn. We had a feast. Each girl was given seven rats. We boiled the rest of the rats and drank the soup to set the dye in our teeth. There were thirty boys. When we returned to the village, Padamale, who had blackened our teeth, collected all of us together and we paid him. He got fifty-two arrows. Our elders had helped us collect them and there were some left over, so the next day our elders suggested that we shoot at targets for them. They set ten banana stalks at

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386

x 159
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Chapter 21

Children's Drawings

00* IN our own culture children's drawings have been used diagnostically in connection with case histories or as therapeutic self-expression. For many years anthropologists have been collecting drawings by children and adults from nonliterate peoples. With the exception of Margaret Mead's work such collections have too often been aimless and sporadic by-products of field work. So far no techniques for the comparative evaluation of children's drawings have been worked out, yet even a casual inspection of collections from different cultures suggests that they may throw much light on the culturally determined phases of personality structure among children. The material which follows is a tentative step in that direction.

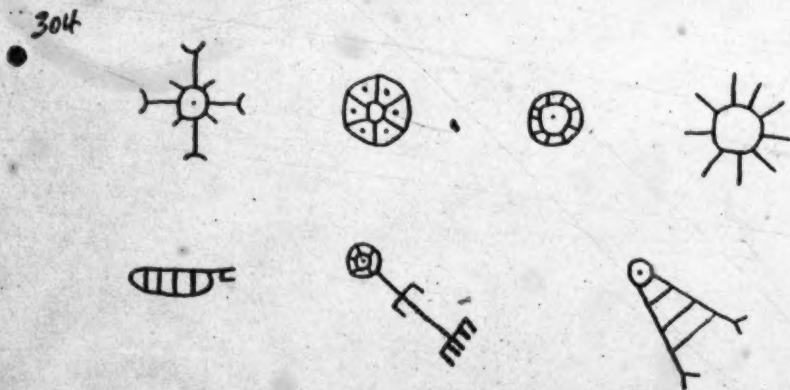


Figure 1. Women's tattoo designs.

531 Children in Atimelang draw pictures with their fingers or with sticks on the hard, level earth of trails and dance places. These drawings resemble those made on paper at my request. They have no relation to adult art. Grown men incise curvilinear designs on spoons, lime boxes, house beams, and lineage-house ladders, or they carve spirit figures in the round. The only forms of artistic expression open to women are the very simple geometric decorations applied to baskets, a limited amount of beadwork, and tattooing (Figure 1).

2: Wilken--278	E-5	(ca. 1880)	1893	OB1	Indonesia	OB1
New Guinea	OT1	Savu	OF15	Malays	ANE	
Borneo	OC1	Alor	OF5	Javanese	OE5	
Mentawi	OD9	Flores	OF9	Lesser Sunda	OF1	
		Timor	OF 20	Bali	OF7	
		Java	OE1	Roti	OF14	
			OD9	Sumba	OF17	
		Redjang-Lampung				

[235 cont.]

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In most instances, as far as the front surface of the teeth is concerned, the treatment of the surface is limited to grinding it down until the enamel is removed, sometimes for no other purpose than to facilitate the blackening of the teeth.

M1
J3
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H13

Besides the methods named above, there is another, whereby the teeth are ground so as to be pointed or triangular until they look like a saw.

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The tools for tooth-filing, at least among the Javanese and the Malays, are generally a little saw, a little chisel, a file, a little hammer, and a piece of stone, sometimes only the last. With the first, the teeth are shaped as desired, and the rough edges are ground flat with the stone. If only the latter is used, then the whole operation is completed with it.

We want to discuss this subject in some detail.

Filing the teeth is quite common among the inhabitants of the Lesser Sunda Islands, for example, on Bali, Roti, Sumba, Savu, the Solor Islands, the southern part of central Flores, and Timor. Sometimes it is a matter of filing the teeth even, but then again, as on Savu and Sumba, the teeth are filed down to the gum.

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Filing the teeth to a point, with or without treatment of the front surface, is found primarily in a few residencies of Java and here and there among various tribes, although it is not as common as filing the teeth even. On Java, filing the teeth to a point involves making the lower edge of the teeth pointed, while the front surface is treated in such a manner that the enamel is only partly removed, producing a relief that is called widji-timun = cucumber pip.

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M1
Br
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The simple filing to a point, that is, filing the teeth down to a triangular point, is more common. It is found among the Oetanata on the southwest coast [236] of New Guinea, among some Negrito tribes, some Malayan peoples of the Philippines, fairly generally among the Dajak tribes of Sarawak, among the Malays of the region XII Kota, the Redjang of Lebong on Sumatra, and among the Mentawai Islanders.